

Week Ending Friday, March 31, 2006

Message on Freedom Efforts in Belarus

March 24, 2006

I send greetings to those working to return freedom to Belarus and observing the 88th anniversary of the first effort to establish an independent Belarus.

Freedom is the birthright of every human soul and the permanent hope of all mankind. The desire for justice, freedom, human rights, and accountable, representative government is universal. Nations grow by allowing the talents and liberties of their people to flourish, not by suppressing freedom. By upholding the rule of law, limiting the power of the state, holding free and fair elections, and respecting the rights of all people, governments can foster more hopeful societies and empower their citizens.

I appreciate those who labor in the shadows to return freedom to Belarus, and our Nation's thoughts are with those who have been harassed, detained, imprisoned, or beaten for their efforts. The United States condemns the actions by Belarusian security services on the morning of March 24, and we urge all members of the international community to join us in condemning any and all abuses and demanding that Belarusian authorities respect the rights of their own citizens to express themselves peacefully. The United States will continue to stand with the people of Belarus and all those who are working to help Belarus take its rightful place in the community of democracies.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this message. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Proclamation 7991—To Implement Certain Provisions of the Dominican Republic-Central America-United States Free Trade Agreement With Respect to El Salvador

March 24, 2006

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

1. On August 5, 2004, the United States entered into the Dominican Republic-Central America-United States Free Trade Agreement (Agreement) with Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua. The Agreement was approved by the Congress in section 101(a) of the Dominican Republic-Central America-United States Free Trade Agreement Implementation Act (the "Act") (Public Law 109-53, 119 Stat. 462) (19 U.S.C. 4001 note).

2. Section 201 of the Act authorizes the President to proclaim such modifications or continuation of any duty, such continuation of duty-free or excise treatment, or such additional duties, as the President determines to be necessary or appropriate to carry out or apply Article 3.3 and Annex 3.3 (including the schedule of United States duty reductions with respect to originating goods) of the Agreement.

3. Presidential Proclamation 7987 of February 28, 2006, modified the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States (HTS) to provide for the preferential tariff treatment being accorded under the Agreement for certain goods of El Salvador.

4. Section 604 of the Trade Act of 1974 (the "1974 Act") (19 U.S.C. 2483), as amended, authorizes the President to embody in the HTS the substance of relevant provisions of that Act, or other acts affecting import treatment, and of actions taken thereunder.